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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1767
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5540
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 8320
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 0658
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0385
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2169
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 4792
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [MASS](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [TH](#)
SUBJECT: THAI REACTION TO USG LIFTING RESTRICTIONS ON
MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Classified By: Ambassador Eric G. John, reason: 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) The Ambassador on February 7 held a press conference at the Embassy to brief the media on the USG's removal of restrictions on military assistance. Over a dozen broadcast and print journalists attended, posing questions on a wide range of issues, including USG views on Burma and on the cabinet. Reporting on the lifting of restrictions was straightforward and without editorializing. Reports were carried inside the popular business paper Krungthep Thurakit (page 15, circulation 50,000), Matichon (page 13, circulation 150,000), Khom Chat Leuk (page 15, circulation 100,000), and on the front page of Naew Na (circulation 30,000). Television channels 7, 9, and 11 featured the press conference in their evening broadcasts.

¶2. (C) Prior to the press conference, the Ambassador explained the removal of restrictions in a brief phone conversation with Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej. The Ambassador used the opportunity to congratulate Samak on his swearing-in, and to remark that the diplomatic corps deeply appreciated Prime Minister Samak's appearance at the Australian Embassy's February 4 national day reception. (Samak had previously told the Ambassador he felt it important that the RTG provide high-level representation at such receptions, and he intended to attend as many as possible.) Samak spoke with enthusiasm about his February 4 phone conversation with President Bush and reiterated his willingness to accommodate USG requests for meetings. After the press conference, the Ambassador also called Foreign Minister Noppadol Pattama to congratulate him on his new position and inform him of the lifting of restrictions, which Noppadol welcomed.

JOHN